

TEN YEARS OF INDIAN EPIGRAPHY (1937-46)

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In this paper the officers of the Epigraphical Branch of the Department of Archaeology summarize the activities of the Branch during the decade when all publications non-essential for war purposes were banned.

THE best part of the period (1937-46) under review synchronized with the last world war and its aftermath, which paralyzed all peace-time activity. Indian epigraphy had also its share of the crippling effects of the war, though its progress was not hampered all too seriously. Village-to-village survey and collection of fresh epigraphs were carried on on a reduced scale, and the cumulative gain has in fact been more than could be expected under the circumstances.

The departmental publications having been suspended for the duration, it has not been possible to publish the results of our activities periodically as usual. And it might still take some time to get our detailed reports printed. It has therefore been thought expedient meanwhile to bring out a summary account for general information as to what was achieved in the field of Indian epigraphy during these ten years.

The total collection comprises upwards of four thousand inscriptions, those from South India being in predominant numbers as ever. The bulk naturally consists of records that are damaged, fragmentary, or comparatively unimportant. Of the rest, the most outstanding ones are noticed below. They cover a very wide range and add a great deal to our knowledge of Indian history. A couple of them even usher in some royal families that were hitherto unknown.

Some of the important epigraphs discovered earlier in the decade have already been published in the *Epigraphia Indica* and *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica*, while some others have been dealt with in other periodicals. These, with a few exceptions, have been excluded from this account.

For the sake of convenience, a chronological order has, as far as possible, been adhered to, the entire material being divided into four groups: copper-plate inscriptions, stone inscriptions, miscellaneous inscriptions, and Muslim inscriptions.

I. COPPER-PLATE INSCRIPTIONS

Two sets of copper-plates (pls. XIX-XX) discovered at Kānukollu in the Kṛishṇā District and belonging to the Śālaṅkāyana dynasty are of outstanding importance. The earlier of the two records refers itself to the reign of Nandivārman. Its script is Brāhmī or the southern alphabet of about the fourth century A.D. The inscription is composed in Prakrit, except for two customary verses towards the end, which are in Sanskrit. It is issued from Vēṅgīpura and registers the grant of the village Piḍiha by Mahārāja Nandivarman, evidently of the Śālaṅkāyana dynasty, to the Chāturvaidya community of the Rathakāra agrahāra. The record is dated the 1st day in the 2nd fortnight of the rainy season in the 14th year, presumably of the donor's reign. By the pious gift, the royal donor wishes to ensure longevity and prosperity not only for himself, but also for his grandson Skandavarman who was then a mere child, *bālaka-mahārājakumāra-Khaṇḍa-pōttassa*. The next charter pertains to this very Skandavarman. It is written entirely in the Sanskrit language and contains the

following genealogy of the Śālaṅkāyana rulers: Hastivarman (I)—his son Nandivarman—his son Hastivarman (II)—his son Skandavarman. They are all styled Mahārāja. The last one is stated to be a devotee of the Lord Chitrarathasvāmin. This document is also issued from Vēṅgī. It records the gift of the village Kōmpara in the district of Kudrahāra by Skandavarman to the very Chāturvaidyā community that figures as recipient in the foregoing charter too. The endowment was made on the 1st day of the bright fortnight of the month of Kārttika in the very 1st year of Skandavarman's reign. It is noteworthy that this charter brings to light the existence of two rulers of the name of Hastivarman in this family. Which of these two is identical with the Hastivarman of the Pedavēgi plates¹ is not certain.

The Wadgāon copper-plates of Vākāṭaka Pravarasēna II add one more charter to a number of similar records already discovered pertaining to this monarch. The present record is important for the geographical data it contains. It was issued from the royal camp on the bank of the river Hiranyā, the present Erai. It registers the grant of 400 *nivartanas* of land by Pravarasēna II to one Rudrārya of the Lauhitya *gōtra*, a resident of Ēkārjunaka, modern Arjuni. The land donated lay in the village Vēluaka, included in the Supratishṭha *āhāra*. Vēluaka, it is stated, was situated to the east of Gridhragrāma, to the south of Kadamasaraka, to the west of Niligrāma and to the north of the road leading to Kōkilā. These can be identified with Gadeghāt, Kosara, Niljai and Khairī respectively. The *āhāra* or sub-division of Supratishṭha comprised the modern Hinganghāt *tahsīl* and parts of the Warora and Yeotmal *tahsīls*.

A hitherto unknown line of kings, namely that of the Pāṇḍavas of Mēkala, is brought to light by a set of copper-plates found at Bamhanī in the Rewa State. No record of this dynasty is previously known. The lineage given in the present charter is as follows:—

1. Jayabala ;
2. Vatsarāja or Vatsēśvara (son of 1) ;
3. Nāgabala (son of 2 from Drōṇabhaṭṭārikā) ;
4. Bharata or Bharatabala (son of 3 from Indrabhaṭṭārikā ; married a princess of Kōsala, Lōkaprakāśā by name).

The object of the inscription is to register the grant of the village Vardhamānaka (to be identified with Bamhanī) in the district of Pañchagartā by Bharatabala to one Lōhitasarasvāmin of the Vatsa *gōtra*. The deed was issued on the 13th day of the dark fortnight in the month of Bhādrapada in the 2nd year of Bharatabala's reign. It was composed by Śiva, son of Rāhasika Īśāna, and engraved by Mihiraka, son of the goldsmith Īśvara. There is evidence enough to show that Bharatabala was a contemporary, and perhaps even a feudatory, of the Vākāṭaka monarch, Narēndrasēna (A.D. 435-70). The characters of the inscription are a perfect specimen of the nail-headed script of the fifth century A.D.

The Banaras plates of Śūravamśi Harirāja (pls. XXI-XXII), which provide yet another specimen of the nail-headed script of the fifth century A.D. are the first record so far known of the Śūra dynasty, about which very little is known even from the *Purāṇas*. The Śūra kings must have ruled in the vicinity of Banaras about this period. It is issued from Sāntanapura and records the grant of land, on a *Mahā-Kārttika-paurṇamāsī*, to one Sōmasvāmin of the Kaunḍinya *gōtra*, who was proficient in the *Upanishads* (*samyag-upanishat-siddhāntavid*). Another remarkable thing about this record is that it was issued under the authority of the Council of Administration (*Mahāmātragaṇa*), consisting of several ministers whose names are mentioned in the charter. The ruling king Harirāja and his consort Anantamahādēvī

¹ *Journal of the Andhra Historical Research Society*, I (1926-7), p. 92.

are stated simply to have accorded their consent to the donation. Equally significant are the concluding words: *svastir=astu Mahāmātragaṇasya || dṛiṣṭam ||*.

From Dhavaḷapēṭa in the Vizagapatam District come a set of plates of the reign of Mahārāja Umavarman. This charter is issued from Sunagara and registers the gift of the village Kuttupu in the Mahēndra *bhōga* by Mahārāja Umavarman to one Khallasvāmin. The donor was a ruler of Kalinga as may be inferred from the mention of the Mahēndra *bhōga*. The script of the inscription is the box-headed variety of the southern alphabet of about the fifth century A.D.

Welcome light on the little known history of the Nala dynasty which ruled in the southern parts of the Central Provinces and thereabout is thrown by the Kēsaribēḍa (Jeypore, Orissa) plates of Nala Arthapati of the fifth century A.D. The script of the present record is also the box-headed variety of the southern alphabet. It is issued from Pushkarī, evidently the capital of the Nalas. It registers the gift of the village Kēsēlaka (apparently the present Kēsaribēḍa) by Mahārāja Arthapati Bhaṭṭāraka to some Brāhmaṇas of the Kautsa *gōtra*. Arthapati is mentioned in the Rithapur plates of his father Bhava[da]ttavarman who had Nandivardhana as his capital.¹ It is noteworthy that the writer of the Rithapur plates, namely Chulla, figures as such also in the present record. Pushkarī is again mentioned in the Poḍāgaḍh stone inscription² which is ascribed to [Skanda]varman, supposed to be another son of Bhavadattavarman. Recently a hoard of gold coins of some Nala kings has come to light.³ Some of them belong to Arthapati also. The combined evidence of the present charter and his gold coins show that he was an independent ruler.

Of the several copper-plate grants of the Pallava dynasty examined during the period, two are worth noticing here. One of them is the Neḍuṅgarāya (Nellore District) grant of Siṃhavarman. Issued from Palakkaḍa by Yuvamahārāja Viṣṇugōpa, son of Skandavarman and grandson of Vīravarman, this charter records the gift of the village Neḍuṅgarāya in Muṇḍarāshṭra as *Śāraṇikagrāma* to several Brāhmaṇas. The inscription is dated the 13th day of the dark fortnight of the month of Jyēshṭha in the 12th year of the reign of the Pallava Mahārāja Siṃhavarman. The relationship of this Siṃhavarman to Yuvamahārāja Viṣṇugōpa, the donor, is not known. He may be the elder brother of Viṣṇugōpa as Fleet and Dubreuil have suggested while discussing his Uruvapalle grant.⁴ The expression, *Śāraṇikagrāma*, which means 'a refugee-village', is noteworthy. The village was apparently created as a place where refugees could take shelter. In this connection, attention may be drawn to a corresponding Tamil expression *añjināṇṇupugaliḍam*, occurring in certain inscriptions of the Tamil country.

The other remarkable Pallava grant is the Nayadhīramaṅgalam (North Arcot District) grant of Nandivarman II Pallavamalla. It is issued in the 33rd year of his reign and introduces his general Avanichandra-yuvarāja, lord of Vilvalapura, at whose request the king granted the village of Nayadhīramaṅgalam to several Brāhmaṇas. We know of another general of this king, named Udayachandra, who was likewise styled the lord of Vilvalapura. Further, in an inscription of the 17th year of Dantivarman,⁵ son and successor of Nandivarman II, mention is made of a certain Avanichandra, who may be identical with his namesake. From this it may be inferred that Avanichandra was a son of Udayachandra. A few more inscriptions of this dynasty which are engraved on stone are reviewed below in the section on stone inscriptions (p. 53).

¹ *Epigraphia Indica*, XIX (1927-28), p. 100.

² *Ibid.*, XXI (1931-32), p. 153.

³ *Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*, I (1939), p. 29.

⁴ *Indian Antiquary*, V (1876), p. 50.

⁵ *South Indian Inscriptions*, IV (1924), no. 132.

Of the dynasty known as kings of Śarabhapura we have a copper-plate record of Mahāsudēvarāja. It was discovered at Kauvātāl in the Rāigarh District of the Central Provinces. It is issued from Śrīpura, and this is significant inasmuch as most of the hitherto known inscriptions of the dynasty are issued from Śarabhapura. It registers the grant of a village named Sunikāyā of the [Dha]karī *bhōga* to one Bhaṭṭa Puraṇḍarasvāmin of the Parāśara *gōtra*. In the present charter the name of Mahāsudēvarāja's father is given as Mahādurgarāja, whereas in some other records it is Mānamātra. This again is a noteworthy point. Possibly both the names refer to one and the same individual. The grant was made on the 10th day of Mārgaśīrsha in the 7th regnal year. It was engraved by one Gōla-simha. *Sarvādhikārādhikṛita Mahāsāmanta* Indrabalarāja acted as *dūtaka* to the grant. This individual is sought to be identified with Udayana's son Indrabala, father of the Sōmavamāsi king Nanna of Mahākōśala.

Among the copper-plate grants of the Eastern Chālukya family two may be noticed in this paper. The earlier of them, obtained from the Collector of the Vizagapatam District, is issued from Kallūra *vāsaka* by Prithivī-Jayasimhavallabha I of the Eastern Chālukya family. The record is important for the data it affords for fixing the starting point of the chronology of this family. It is dated the 15th day of the 8th fortnight of the Hēmantha season, in the 18th year of the king's reign, when a lunar eclipse occurred. This regularly corresponds to the 13th February, A.D. 659, when there was a lunar eclipse. Thus the initial year of the king's reign was A.D. 641. His father and predecessor Kubja-Vishṇu-wardhana is stated in the records of this dynasty to have had a reign of 18 years. Consequently, the starting-point of the Eastern Chālukya chronology, commencing with the rule of Kubja-Vishṇuwardhana, the founder of this line, would be A.D. 624. This would settle finally the controversy about the date of accession of Kubja-Vishṇuwardhana which had been fixed by Fleet long ago at c. 615 A.D.¹ and held the field so long.

The other Eastern Chālukya grant refers itself to the reign of Sarvalōkāśraya Vijayasiddhi (Maṅgi-Yuvarāja) and registers his gift of the village of Ēlūru (West Godāvarī District) in the Vēṅgi *vishaya* to one Śrīdharaśarma of Ayyavōlu, apparently the modern Aihole in the Bijāpur District of the Bombay Province. This would show that the Eastern Chālukyas continued to patronize scholars hailing from their ancestral home. The gift was made in the 10th year of his reign on the occasion of the *annaprāśana* of his son, prince Vishṇu-wardhana. The Chēvūru plates of Amma I² constitute another Eastern Chālukya grant of the present collection, and register a similar gift made likewise on the occasion of the *annaprāśana* of the donor's son Vijayāditya V.

The Kāṇḍyam (Vizagapatam District) plates, issued by a later ruler of this family, apparently Dānārṇava, register the bestowal of the governorship of the Pottapināḍu-300 division on Malliyarāja and Guṇḍiyarāja of the Mudugoṇḍa-Chālukya *vaṃśa*. References to this family are rare both in inscriptions and in literature. As the fourth plate containing particulars about the donor is mutilated, it is not possible to determine as to who the actual donor was. The part of the record containing the date is also broken, except that the words *dvīnava* are preserved. Hence, we may not be wrong if we restore it to Śaka [8]92 (= A.D. 970) which falls within the reign of Dānārṇava.

Only one copper-plate inscription of the Western Chālukya dynasty is worth noticing here. It is engraved on a set of plates found at Shiggāon in the Dhārwar District of the Bombay Province. The record is issued by king Vijayāditya, in the Śaka year 630, from his victorious camp at Kisuvōjal. In other records of this dynasty Raktapura is mentioned as the victorious camp and it has been identified with modern Lakshmesvar in the Miraj

¹ *Indian Antiquary*, XX (1891), p. 5.

² *Epigraphia Indica*, XXVII (1947-48), pp. 44ff.

State in Bombay-Karnatak. But Raktapura is plainly a Sanskrit rendering of the word *Kisuvola*, *kisu* meaning 'red' and *volal-pola*, 'a town'. And as *Kisuvola* is also stated to be a victorious camp in the present record, Raktapura has to be identified with modern *Paṭṭadakal* in the *Bījāpur* District of the Bombay Province. The inscription records certain gifts by the king to a *Jina-bhavana*, erected by the princess *Kuṅkumadēvi*. The grant is stated to have been made at the instance of the *Ālupa* chief *Chitravāhana* at the time when the king visited *Vanavāsī* to meet the *Ālupa* ruler. In a late eleventh century record the princess *Kuṅkumadēvi* is mentioned as a sister of king *Vijayāditya*. Her mention in a contemporary record like the present one is thus of great interest. It may be noted that this lady also figures in another record of this ruler.¹ Another inscription of the same king is on stone and its importance is discussed in the next section (below, p. 54).

Of the *Chōlas* of *Rēnāṇḍu*, we have a copper-charter in the collection. It was found at *Dommara-Nandyāla* in the *Cuddapah* District and gives a full genealogy of the family down to *Puṇyakumāra*, who is given the title of 'Lord of *Hiranyarāshṭra*'. It is issued from the king's residence at *Pudoṛūru* in the 10th year of his reign on the full moon day of the month of *Phālguna*. The object of the grant was the gift of lands in the village of *Nandigāma* and *Pasiṇḍikuṛu* to some *Brāhmaṇas*. Palaeographically the record may be assigned to about the eighth century A.D. It may be noted that this is the second known copper-plate grant of this ruler.

The *Salem* (*Salem* District) plates of Western *Gaṅga* *Śrīpurusha*, dated *Śaka* 693, give a hitherto unknown genealogy, for three generations, of *Śrīpurusha*'s daughter-in-law *Kaṇchiabbā*, wife of *Duggamāra*. The genealogy is as follows: King *Nannappa*—his son *Śivarāja*—his son *Gōvindarāja* (whose wife was *Vinayavatī*, daughter of king *Vikramāditya*)—his son *Indarāja* whose elder sister was *Kaṇchiabbā*. Two of these persons, viz. *Śivarāja* and his son *Gōvindarāja* appear to be identical with the *Rāshtrakūṭa* princes of the same name figuring as subordinates of the Western *Chālukya* king *Vikramāditya II* in his *Narvaṇ* plates, dated *Śaka* 664.²

The *Narasīngapur* plate and *Jurerpur* (*Cuttack* District) plate of *Dēvānandadēva* are a welcome addition. They belong to the *Nanda* dynasty of *Orissa*, two similar inscriptions of which are already known: *Talmul* plates of *Dhruvānanda*³ and *Bāripadā* Museum plate of *Dēvānanda*.⁴ The *Narasīngapur* plate is damaged. Its inscription is shorter and the text faulty, but it settles the question of the exact name of the family; it is *Nanda* and not *Nandōdbhava*. Both the inscriptions mention the *maṇḍala* of *Airāvaṭa*, which occurs also in the two previously known records and has been located in the *Cuttack* District, the name having been identified with *Raṭāgarh*. The *Jurerpur* plate was issued from *Jayapura*, held to be identical with *Jaipur* in *Dhenkānāl* State.

The *Chārāla* (*Chittoor* District) plates of *Vīra Rājēndradēva*⁵ are the only copper-plate record known so far of this king. Besides giving a complete account of the events of the king's reign up to his 7th year, it states that the *Chōla* king *Vīra Rājēndra* started on his expedition against the Western *Chālukya* king *Ahavamalla* (*Sōmēśvara I*) on the very day of his coronation and defeated him five times. One of these victories was won at the battle of *Kūḍal Saṅgamam*. The record is also important in that it helps to fill up the lacunae in the *Kanyākumārī* stone inscription of the same king⁶ which is damaged in some portions.

¹ *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1934-35, p. 57, para 8.

² *Epigraphia Indica*, XXVII (1947-48), p. 125.

³ *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, XVI (1930), p. 457.

⁴ *Epigraphia Indica*, XXVI (1941-42), p. 74.

⁵ *Ibid.*, XXV (1939-40), p. 241.

⁶ *Ibid.*, XVIII (1925-26), p. 21.

Another noteworthy feature of the inscription is that it contains, besides the regnal year of the king, the Śaka year, a datum that is rare in the Chōla inscriptions of the period. The object of the grant is the gift of the village Chērām *alias* Madhurāntaka-Chaturvēdimaṅgalam in Pulinādu to three Brāhmaṇas on the occasion of Uttarāyaṇa-saṅkramaṇa in the Śaka year 991, Saumya (= A.D. 1069). The Sanskrit *praśasti*, written in good *kāvya* style, is stated to have been composed by Chandrabhūṣaṇa-Bhaṭṭa. The section on stone inscriptions contains some more important records of this dynasty (below, p. 56).

Of the Telugu Chōḍas of the later period a copper-plate record of Bhaktirāja was discovered at Peṇṭapāḍu in the West Godāvarī District. It is the second known copper-charter of this chief, the other being his Madras Museum plates.¹ The importance of the present record lies in the revelation that he owed his rise to the support of Prōlaya Nāyaka who is known to have rescued the Āndhra country from the hands of the Muhammadans in the fourteenth century A.D. We learn from it that Prōlaya Nāyaka was an associate of Vēṅga-Bhūpati, the maternal uncle of Bhaktirāja. Consequent on the death of Vēṅga-Bhūpati in the fight with the Muhammadans without leaving an heir to his kingdom, Prōlaya-Nāyaka installed Bhaktirāja as the ruler of his uncle's territory which seems to have comprised Vēṅgī and other tracts. Another point of interest in the record is the mention of Vīra Vōbi Nāyaka the son of Prōlaya Nāyaka, not known hitherto. This prince is stated to have been made the ruler of his father's kingdom by Kāpaya Nāyaka who is described as the paternal uncle's son (*pitṛivyaśutah*) of Prōlaya Nāyaka. The object of the present charter is the gift, by the king Bhaktirāja, of the village Peṇṭapāḍu in the Vēṅgī *viśhaya* to several Brāhmaṇas. It bears the date Śaka 1265, Kārttika śu. 15, Thursday, the day of a lunar eclipse (= A.D. 1342, 13th November, Wednesday (not Thursday), when there was a lunar eclipse).

An interesting document of Prōlaya Nāyaka referred to in the charter noticed above comes from Vilasā in the East Godāvarī District. It is well-known that he was the cousin of the famous Kāpaya Nāyaka of the fourteenth century A.D., who re-established Hindu rule in Teliṅgāṇa after defeating the Muhammadans who had conquered it from the Kākatiyas. It gives a graphic description of the Muhammadan invasion of the Kākatiya kingdom and narrates the circumstances leading to the death of Pratāparudra, the last of the Kākatiyas. He died on the banks of the Sōmōdbhavā, i.e. Narmadā, while he was being taken to Delhi as a prisoner. This statement combined with the account of his death given in the Kaluva-chēru grant of Anitalli² that he died of his own free will would indicate that he committed suicide by drowning himself in the river Narmadā, preferring death to ignominy.

Among the copper-plate inscriptions of the Gajapati kings of Kālīṅga examined during this period, the Chiruvrōlu grant of Hamvīra is important inasmuch as it is the only record so far known of this prince. It is dated in Śaka 1383, Vṛisha, Bhādrapada ba. 15, Friday (= A.D. 1461, September 4, Friday) and registers the grant of the village Chiruvrōlu on the Kṛishṇā clubbed with Mēllamiṛru, under the new name of Pratāpa-Hamvīrapuram. It recounts the campaigns of his father Kapilēśvara against Hamṇā (i.e. Vijayanagara), Dhārā, Kalburga and Ḍhilli.

II. STONE INSCRIPTIONS

Of the stone inscriptions, the earliest in point of time is the Brāhmī inscription engraved on a boulder of a cavern at Māmandūr (North Arcot District) near Kāñchīpuram. It

¹ *Journal of Oriental Research*, V (1931), p. 128.

² *Bhārati*, XXI (1931), part I, pp. 553-567.

appears to be written in the early Tamil language. As such, it adds one more to the series of early Tamil inscriptions written in Brāhmī characters in South India. As the characters of this inscription bear close similarity to those of the Arikamedu graffiti (see below, p. 57), its date may be very near to that of the latter which is considered to be of about the first century A.D.

Next in chronological order comes the Brāhmī inscription which is found engraved on the side of a cistern, till recently buried underground, in front of Cave No. II of the famous group of Buddhist caves at Kanheri near Bombay. It is in Prakrit and records the erection of the cistern by one Puṇarvasu, a merchant of Kalyāṇa. The Kanheri caves have already yielded quite a number of similar donative inscriptions.

The Mithouri pillar inscription (pl. XXIII) is another Buddhist record of the pre-Gupta period. It comes from a village called Mithouri in Rewa State. It is engraved on a stone pillar which originally served as shaft of a stone umbrella over a Buddha statue, as revealed by the concluding words of the inscription: *chhatram pratishṭhāpayati*, etc. The record is dated in the year 80 of an unspecified era and refers itself to the reign of a hitherto unknown ruler Bhaṭṭāraka Mahārāja Vaṅgeśvara (?) Jāngata (?).

The Bandhogarh cave inscriptions are among the valuable discoveries which add to our knowledge of the history of Central India in the early centuries of the Christian era. Over a score of these inscriptions were copied in rock-cut caverns at Bandhogarh in the Rāmgarh *tahsil* of Rewa State. The main group of inscriptions introduces three generations of kings of whom very little was known before. They are Mahārāja Vasiṭhiputa siri Bhīmasēna (year 51), his son Mahārāja Kochchiputa Poṭhasiri (years 86 and 87) and his son Mahārāja Kosikiputa Bhaṭṭadēva or Bhadaḍēva (year 90). Of these only Mahārāja Bhīmasēna was known so far, from the painted inscription on the Ginja hill.¹ It can now be safely assumed that this Bhīmasēna is identical with the Bhīmasēna of the Bhīṭa seal,² as this also gives his metronymic Vasiṭhiputa. These inscriptions record donations of several cave-dwellings and amenities like wells, gardens and *maṇḍapas*, near these dwellings. One of the records of Poṭhasiri mentions his Minister of Foreign Affairs, named Māgha, son of the minister Chakōra. Another inscription of the 87th year of the reign of the same ruler mentions Pavata (Parvata) which is apparently identical with *Po-fa-to* noticed by the Chinese pilgrim Yuan Chwang. This is the earliest epigraphical reference to this place. Two more inscriptions found at Bandhogarh are of equally great interest. One of them is of Mahārāja Śivamagha of whose reign we have only one more inscription from Kosam (Kauśāmbī). The other is of the reign of Rājan Vaiśravaṇa who was the son of the Mahāsēnāpati Bhadrabala. The only other inscription known of him is that found at Kosam.³ It may be noted, however, that in the latter Vaiśravaṇa calls himself Mahārāja but no mention is made of his father. *Mahāsēnāpati* of the Bandhogarh inscription may have been a title of nobility and need not be taken in the sense of an army-commander. It is just possible that Vaiśravaṇa who gained more eminence than his father, assumed at first the title of *Rājan* which was changed to *Mahārāja* when he became more powerful.

A Brāhmī inscription at Vēlpūru (Guntur District) is of some interest. It is in the Prakrit language and the characters are of about the second or third century A.D. It belongs to the reign of a king (name lost) who is called a Mahārāja and a Hāritiputa. The name of the family to which he belonged appears to be *Aira*. It may be noted that this family-name occurs in the inscriptions of Manchapurī and Hāthīgumphā caves in Orissa of about the same period.

¹ Cunningham, *Arch. Surv. Ind. Rep.*, XXI (Calcutta, 1885), p. 119.

² *An. Rep.*, *Arch. Surv. Ind.*, 1911-12 (Calcutta, 1915), p. 51.

³ *Epigraphia Indica*, XXIV (1937-38), p. 146.

Five Prakrit inscriptions (pl. XXV) were discovered at the small village of Ghanṭasāla on the east coast, in the Kṛishṇā District of the Madras Province. They are all Buddhist donative records, incised on marble pillars, in Brāhmī characters of about A.D. 300. They resemble those found in greater numbers on other Buddhist sites in the neighbourhood, such as Amarāvātī, Jaggayyapēṭa and Nāgārjunikoṇḍa. One of the inscriptions mentions a sea-captain (*Mahānāvika*), Sivaka (Skt. Śivaka) by name, indicating thereby that the place was formerly a sea-port. In another, the place is mentioned under its ancient name of *Kaṁṭakasōla*. An article on these records is under publication in the *Epigraphia Indica* by Professor J. Ph. Vogel, who edited the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscriptions.

Another Brāhmī inscription was found at Gaṅgapērūru in the Cuddapah District. It is engraved on the broad side of a pillar broken both at the top and the bottom and shaped into an ellipse with its narrow ends flattened. Its language is Prakrit and characters are of the third to fourth century A.D. It refers to the *chhāyā-khabha* (sculptured memorial stone?) of an individual, named Śivadāsa who died in a fight on the occasion of a cattle-raid. The present is the first known Prakrit inscription in Brāhmī in the Cuddapah District. It may be added that there is a tradition that the Western Gaṅgas of Talakāḍ hailed originally from Gaṅga-Pērūru, the findspot of the inscription.

All the inscriptions so far discovered at the Buddhist site of Nāgārjunikoṇḍa (Guntur District) are in Prakrit. Recently, however, a couple of fragmentary Sanskrit inscriptions have come to light there. The extant portion of one of them speaks of a *dharmma-kathika*, 'religious preacher', whose name is lost. He is described as *śuddh-āchāra-vṛitta* and *āgama-vināy-ōpadēśa-prakaraṇ[āchā]ryya*. The script of the inscriptions is Brāhmī of about the fourth century A.D.

The Rewa State in which the Bandhogarh inscriptions noticed above were found has yielded yet another important record. It is engraved on a pillar at the village Supiā. It is dated in the Gupta year 141 and refers itself to the reign of the Gupta monarch Skandagupta. The genealogy given in the record begins with Ghaṭōtkacha. Curiously enough the family is referred to as Ghaṭōtkacha *vaṁśa*. This is perhaps the first record where so much importance is given to this member of the royal family. Another interesting feature of this inscription is that Chandragupta II is mentioned only by his surname, Vikramāditya, which is of common occurrence on his coins. The object of the inscription is to record the erection of the pillar by one Chhandaka, son of the banker Hari and grandson of the banker Kaivarta, a resident of Avaḍara.

An inscription of Pallava Śihavammā was found in an ancient site at Manchikallu in the Guntur District, Madras Province. It is written in early Brāhmī characters of about the third century A.D. and in the Prakrit language. This mutilated record refers itself to the reign of Śihavammā (Śiṁhavarman) of the Pallava (Pallava) dynasty and the Bhāradāya (Bhāradvāja) *gōtra* and mentions a *dēvakula* to which a gift seems to have been made. In point of palaeography this inscription appears to be earlier than the earliest Pallava records hitherto known, viz. the Mayidavōlu and Hirahāḍagalli plates of Śivaskandavarman.¹ Śihavammā of the inscription under review must therefore be considered an earlier member of the dynasty. It is not unlikely that he is the same as Mahārāja Bappasāmi (*bappa* means 'father') of the Hirahāḍagalli record. It may be noted, however, that in the present stone inscription he does not bear any title indicative of suzerainty. Probably he was, at the time of this record, still a subordinate of the Ikshvākus who were then ruling over that part of the country and whose inscriptions are found in the neighbourhood.

An inscription of Pallava Śiṁhavarman (pl. XXIV), in Pallava-Grantha characters of about the seventh century A.D. and written in the Sanskrit language, comes from Śivanvāyal,

¹ *Epigraphia Indica*, VI (1900-01), p. 84; I (1892), p. 5.

Chingleput District. It states that the Pallava king Simhavarman, described as the performer of the *Daśāśvamedha* and *Bahusuvāna* sacrifices, made a gift (details lost). The palaeography of the inscription would suggest that this ruler was Narasimhavarman I, the conqueror of Vātāpi. If so, this would be the third known record of this king, the other two being those at Bādāmi (Bijāpur District) and Tirukkalukunram (Chingleput District).¹

To Nripatungavarman, a later member of this dynasty belongs the Maṭhavalam (Chittoor District) inscription. It is important in that it is dated in the 41st year of his reign, for the latest regnal year known for him so far is 26. The present record thus extends his reign by 15 years. This would help in re-considering the dates assigned to the later Pallava chiefs.

The earliest stone epigraph in Telugu language written in characters resembling the Pallava-Grantha comes from Tippalūru in the Cuddapah District. It refers itself to the reign of Puṇyakumāra whose dynasty is not specified. It registers a grant of *panāśa* at Tippalūru by the king to *pāradāya* (Bhāradvāja) Kilevura Kattīśarman of Tarkkapulōlu. The king is here given the titles *Madamudita*, *Maruṇṇa-piḍuku*, etc. which bear a close similarity to the *birudas* of some of the early Chōla kings of Rēnāṇḍu.

From Mācherla in the Palnad *taluk* (Guntur District) comes an inscription of the Eastern Chālukya king Jayasimhavallabha (II). It is dated in the 8th year (c. A.D. 714) and records a gift of land to the god Arahanta-Bhaṭāra by certain officers of Paḷḷināṇḍu. It is noteworthy that as early as the eighth century A.D. this region of Palnāḍu was called Paḷḷināṇḍu. Several views have been put forward regarding the derivation of the geographical name Palnāḍu. The form Paḷḷināṇḍu is composed of the words *paḷḷi* and *nāṇḍu*. In Tamil *paḷḷi* means 'a Buddhist or Jaina settlement' in which sense it appears to have been used in the present inscription. As for *nāṇḍu* (or *nāḍu*), it obviously stands for a territorial division in all the Dravidian languages. This derivation is supported by the fact that in olden days the Palnāḍu region actually abounded in Buddhist and Jaina settlements whose ruins lie scattered in the region to this day.

A Kannaḍa inscription of the reign of the Western Chālukya king Vijayāditya deserves special mention on account of its value for reconstructing the later Pallava chronology. It was found in Uḷḷaḷa in the Kurnool District. It is dated in the 35th year of the king's reign corresponding to A.D. 730-1. We learn from it that Yuvarāja Vikramāditya (II) while returning after conquering Kāñchī and levying tribute from the Pallava king Paramēśvara made a gift of the villages Uḷḷaḷu and Pariyaḷu to Durvinīt-Ereyappa of the Koṅguṇi (i.e. Western Gaṅga) family. Vikramāditya II, as specifically stated in the Vakkaḷēri and Kendūr plates of his son, Kīrtivarman II, after his accession to the throne, defeated the Pallava king Nandipōtavarman. The Uḷḷaḷa record gives us the additional information that even at the time when he was Yuvarāja he had once defeated the Pallava king Paramēśvara, who is evidently Paramēśvaravarman II, the predecessor of Nandivarman. It follows therefore that at the time of this record, namely A.D. 730-1, the contemporary Pallava ruler was Paramēśvaravarman II and that Nandivarman II had not yet come to the throne. Hence the starting-point of the later Pallava chronology beginning with the reign of Nandivarman II has to be placed subsequent to A.D. 730-1.

An inscription of Jayasimha II of the later Chālukyas who had their capital at Kalyāṇi is preserved in the Hyderabad Museum. It is dated Śaka 949, Prabhava (= A.D. 1027), and mentions Sōmaladēvī, a hitherto unknown daughter of Jayasimha II. We already know of another daughter of this king named Āvalladēvī, the queen of the Yādava prince Bhīllama III. Sōmaladēvī is stated to have made a grant to a *basadi* at Piriya-Mosaṅgi (modern Māsiki). The grant was made when the princess was camping at Pulipodaṅgu.

¹ *South Indian Inscriptions*, XI, pt. I (1940), p. 1; XII (1943), p. 9.

Three records of the Rāshtrakūṭas of Malkhed may be reviewed here. The first is the Arshinaguppi (Dhārwar District) inscription of Amōghavarsha, dated Śaka 781, which mentions the place-name Kīṛuguppudūr. Now, the name of the village granted in a copper-plate inscription of Kadamba Kṛishṇavarman II¹ is Kīṛukuppuṭūr, which may as well be read as Kīṛuguppudūr. This has been identified with Kubtūr in the Shimoga District of the Mysore State. But the mention of Kīṛuguppudūr in the present stone record helps us to identify the Kīṛuguppudūr of the Kadamba plates with modern Arshinaguppi in the Hāngal taluk of the Dhārwar District.

The second Rāshtrakūṭa record is the Kamalāpuram (Cuddapah District) inscription of Indra III which is noteworthy as it helps in carrying forward the reign of this king to at least the end of A.D. 925. Till recently the last date of Indra III was taken to be A.D. 917 on the basis of the Daṇḍāpur record of his successor Gōvinda IV, dated Śaka 840 (= A.D. 918).² Records later than this date mentioning the king merely by the title of Nityavarsha were considered to belong to the reign of Gōvinda IV, on the assumption that both Indra III and Gōvinda IV had this title. But the record under review, referring itself to the reign of Nityavarsha Indranarēndra and dated Śaka 848, Pārthiva, establishes definitely that Indra continued to rule till at least A.D. 925 and that the Daṇḍāpur record should be considered to have been issued by Gōvinda in his capacity as Yuvarāja. It may be observed in passing that a record of the reign of Nityavarsha from Haḷeritti, Dhārwar District of the Bombay Province, is dated Śaka 850 (= A.D. 927) and thus extends his reign by two more years, i.e. up to A.D. 927.

The Hulgūr (Dhārwar District) record of Khoṭṭiga (pl. XXVI) is the third record of the Rāshtrakūṭa dynasty. It is in Kannaḍa and is issued in Śaka 893, Śukla (= A.D. 971). It records a gift by Abbarasi, wife of the Gaṅga chief, Guttiya-Gaṅga, i.e. Mārasimha II. She is stated to be the daughter of a certain Dānapa (*Dānapātmaje*). Abbarasi was not known so far either from literary or epigraphical sources. Dānapa, her father, cannot now be identified. It may, however, be noted that the Eastern Chālukya king, Dānārṇava (A.D. 970-973) who was a contemporary of Mārasimha II, was also known by the names of Dānapa and Dānapēśa.

Of the reign of Veṅkaya-Chōḷa Mahārāja, a scion of the family known to historians as the Telugu-Chōḷas, we have an inscription at Doṅgalasāni in the Cuddapah District. It is dated in the 41st regnal year of the king and is written in Telugu characters of the ninth to tenth century A.D. Among the members of this dynasty, this is the earliest chief to bear the epithet Teṅkaṇāḍitya, two of the later members who bore this epithet being Nannichōḍa, the author of the Telugu work *Kumārasambhavam*, and Oppili-Siddhi II who was a contemporary and probably a subordinate of Kākatiya Gaṇapati.

An inscription at Vēmulaṇḍa in the Nizam's Dominions is of the reign of Baddega of the little known family of the Chālukyas of Vēmulaṇḍa. It consists of two Sanskrit verses and records the construction of a *Jinālaya* by Baddega for Sōmadēvasūri of the Gauḍa *saṁgha*. Baddega is stated to be the fifth in descent from Yuddhamalla, the ruler of Sapādalaksha country. Sōmadēvasūri of the record is evidently identical with the author of *Yaśastilakachampū*, in the colophon of which it is stated that his patron was Vaddega, son of Arikēsarin of the Chālukya family.

Two Pāṇḍya records from Śālaigram (Ramnad District), written in Vaṭṭeḷuttu characters of the tenth century A.D., are engraved on the door-jambs of the temple of Varaguṇa-Īśvara at the place. One of them is dated in the 2nd + 1st (3rd) year of the reign of the Pāṇḍya king Kōch-Chaḍaiya-Mārar and the other is of the 15th + 5th (20th) year of the reign of

¹ *Digest of Annual Report of Kannada Research in Bombay Province, 1940-41 (1945)*, p. 366.

² *Indian Antiquary*, XII (1883), p. 222.

Śōlānralaikōṇḍa Vīra-Pāṇḍyar, i.e. Vīra-Pāṇḍya 'who took the head of the Chōla'. As the characters of both the records resemble each other very closely, it is probable that they were caused to be incised by the two kings who were not far removed from each other in point of time.

In the Sundarēśvara temple at Madurā were found two Tamil inscriptions of Pāṇḍya Kulaśēkhara which register gifts of land as *jīvita-kāni* to the musicians belonging to the temple. One of the musicians who is given the title of *Vallāṇai-Veṇṇa-Pāṇḍya-Vādyamārāyaṇ* (= the chief-master of instrumental music to the king Vallāṇai-Veṇṇa-Pāṇḍya) is apparently the royal musician. In the other inscription are mentioned the following musical instruments: (1) *vīra-maddaḷam*, (2) *maddaḷam*, (3) *timilai*, (4) *śēmakkalam*, (5) *kāśai*, and (6) *tiruchchiṇṇam*. These records are assignable to the thirteenth century A.D.

Śrīraṅgam (Tiruchirappalli District) inscription of Chōla Kulōttuṅga I is a Kannaḍa record, dated in the 29th year of Kulōttuṅga I. It records a gift for lamps by an officer bearing the titles of *Kannaḍa-sandhi-vigrahi* and *Daṇḍanāyaka* of the Western Chālukya king Vikramāditya VI. The inscription seems to throw light on the friendly relations that existed between the two great dynasties, once hostile, the Chōlas and the Chālukyas, towards the end of the eleventh century A.D. Another inscription of the same Chōla ruler in Telugu is at Guḍimūla in the West Godāvārī District. It gives the name of the king as Sarvalōkāśraya Viṣṇuvardhana Mahārāja and is dated Śaka 1017 (= A.D. 1095-6) in the 35th year of the king's reign. The date cited here would show that the king counted his regnal years from A.D. 1061, which is known to be the last date of his father Rājārāja who ruled at Vēṅgī. This fact is important since it is held that Vijayāditya VII, the paternal uncle of Kulōttuṅga I, seized the throne of Vēṅgī at the time of his brother's death and placed his son Śaktivarman on it. The present record, on the other hand, would show that Kulōttuṅga I succeeded his father on the throne of Vēṅgī in A.D. 1061, thus disproving the view that Śaktivarman usurped the throne.

The Kōni (Bilāspur District) inscription of Kalachuri Prithvīdēva II is a long *praśasti*, dated in the Chēdi year 900 (= A.D. 1148-9). The village of Kōni is near Bilāspur in the Central Provinces. The inscription records the erection of a Śiva temple, *Śivapañchāyatana*, by a Brāhmaṇa called Purushōttama, who is credited with many other similar religious acts. It also registers the grant of the village Salōnī to the said Brāhmaṇa by the Kalachuri king Prithvīdēva II.

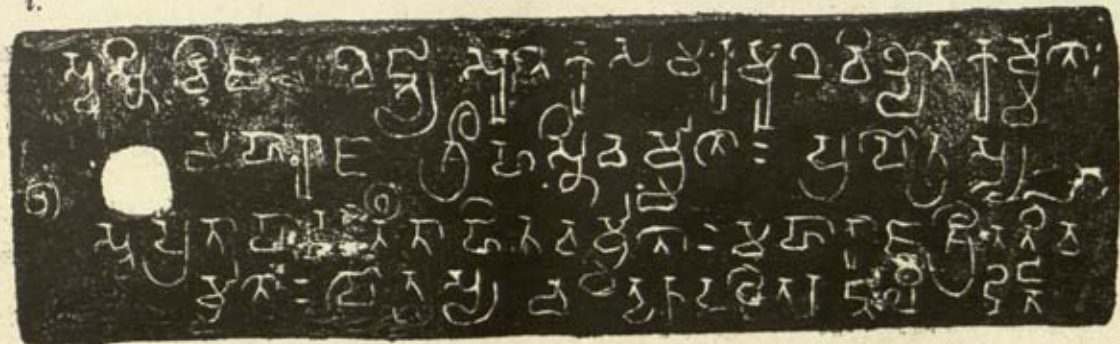
One record of Yādava Siṅghaṇa dated Śaka 1156 was copied at Mantravāḍi in the Dhārwar District of the Bombay Province. It is important as it provides the earliest epigraphical reference to the *vachana* or saying of the famous Liṅgāyat saint Siddha-Rāmanāthadēva.

An inscription from Chingleput District of the time of Vijaya-Gaṇḍagōpāla, a king of Kāñchī (c. A.D. 1250), gives the interesting information that Karikāla-Chōla settled at Mayilāppūr 70 families including that of Ēlēlaṅgaṇ. Ēlēlaṅgaṇ's association with Mayilāppūr is noteworthy as he is known to have been the merchant friend of Tiruvalluvar, also of Mayilāppūr, author of the famous Tamil classic, the *Kuraḷ*.

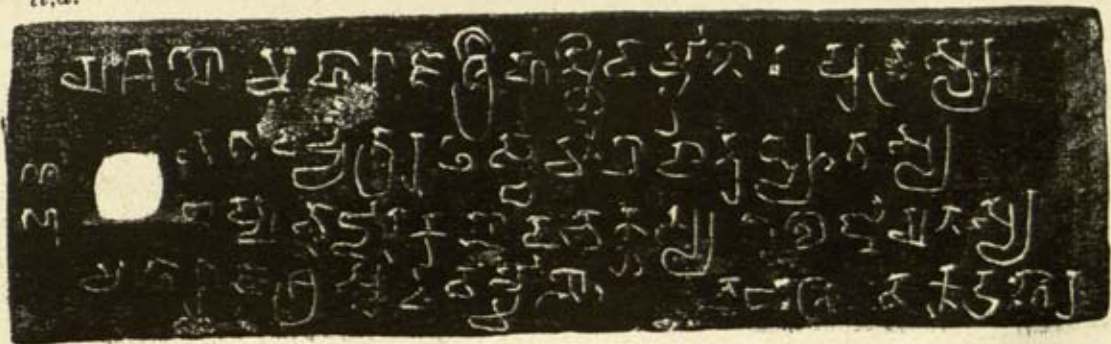
A Hoysala record from the Tiruchirappalli District, of the 19th year of Rāmanāthadēva (= A.D. 1273-74) states that a goldsmith made a gift of a forehead-plate to the god of the village Peruṅguḍi (Tiruchirappalli District) in gratitude for the restoration of the eye-sight of his son who had lost it while he was young.

The interest evinced in the formation and maintenance of libraries by philanthropic persons is revealed in the Śrīraṅgam (Tiruchirappalli District) inscription of Pālappalli Nilakanṭha Nāyakar. It records the founding of a library in the *maṇḍapa* of the Raṅganāthasvāmin temple at Śrīraṅgam by the chief. From another inscription at Jambukēśvaram near Śrīraṅgam, this chief is known to have flourished in the fourteenth year of the

i.



ii,a.

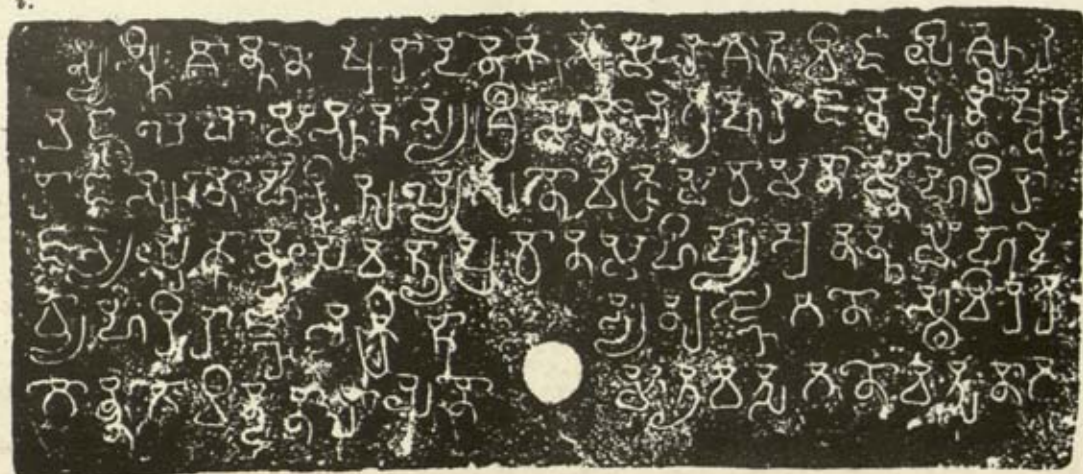


ii,b.

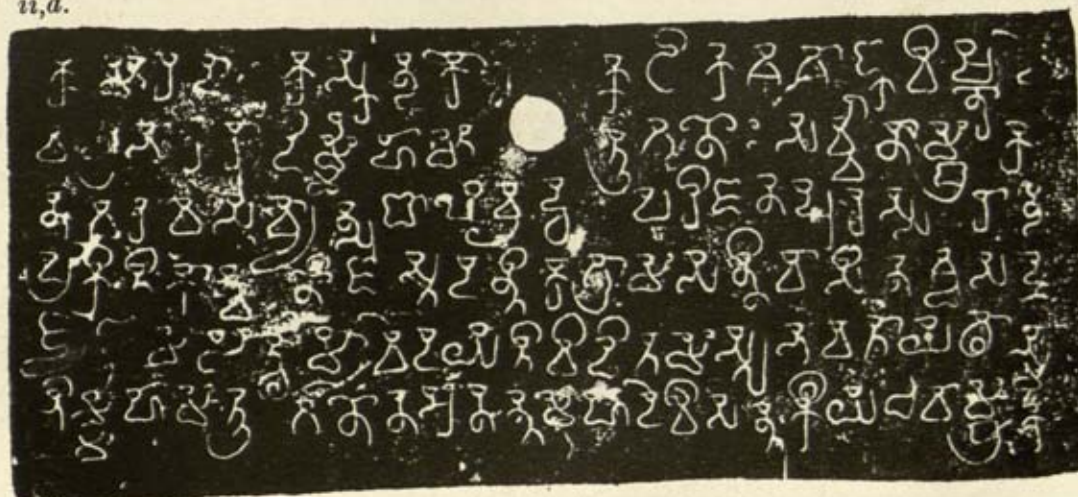


Kanukollu plates of Śālaṅkāyana Skandavarman. Scale $\frac{1}{2}$

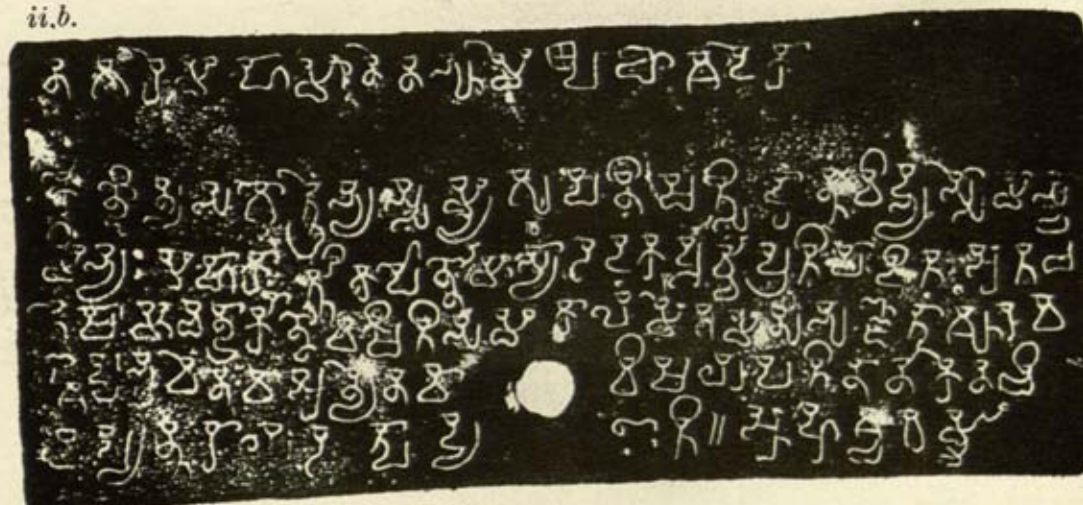
3.



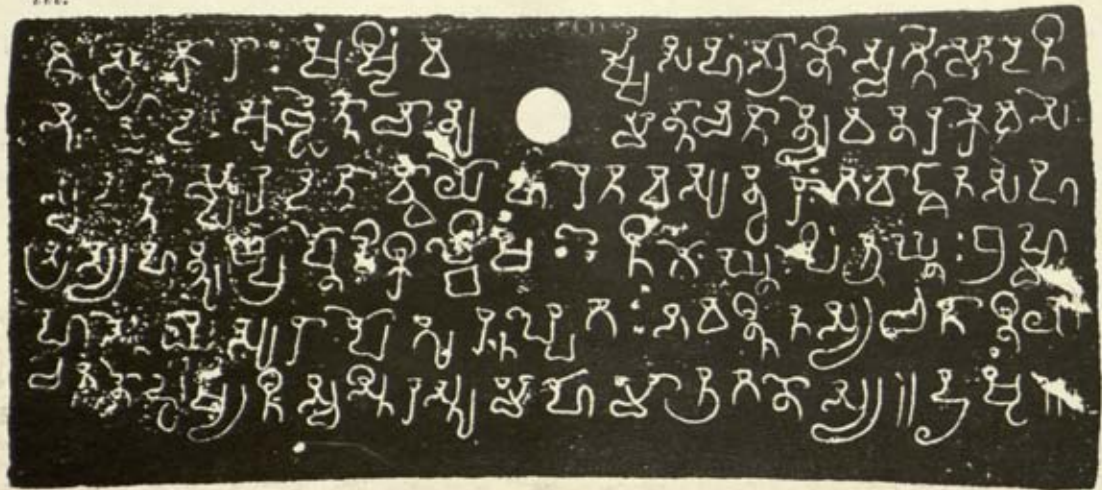
ii. a.



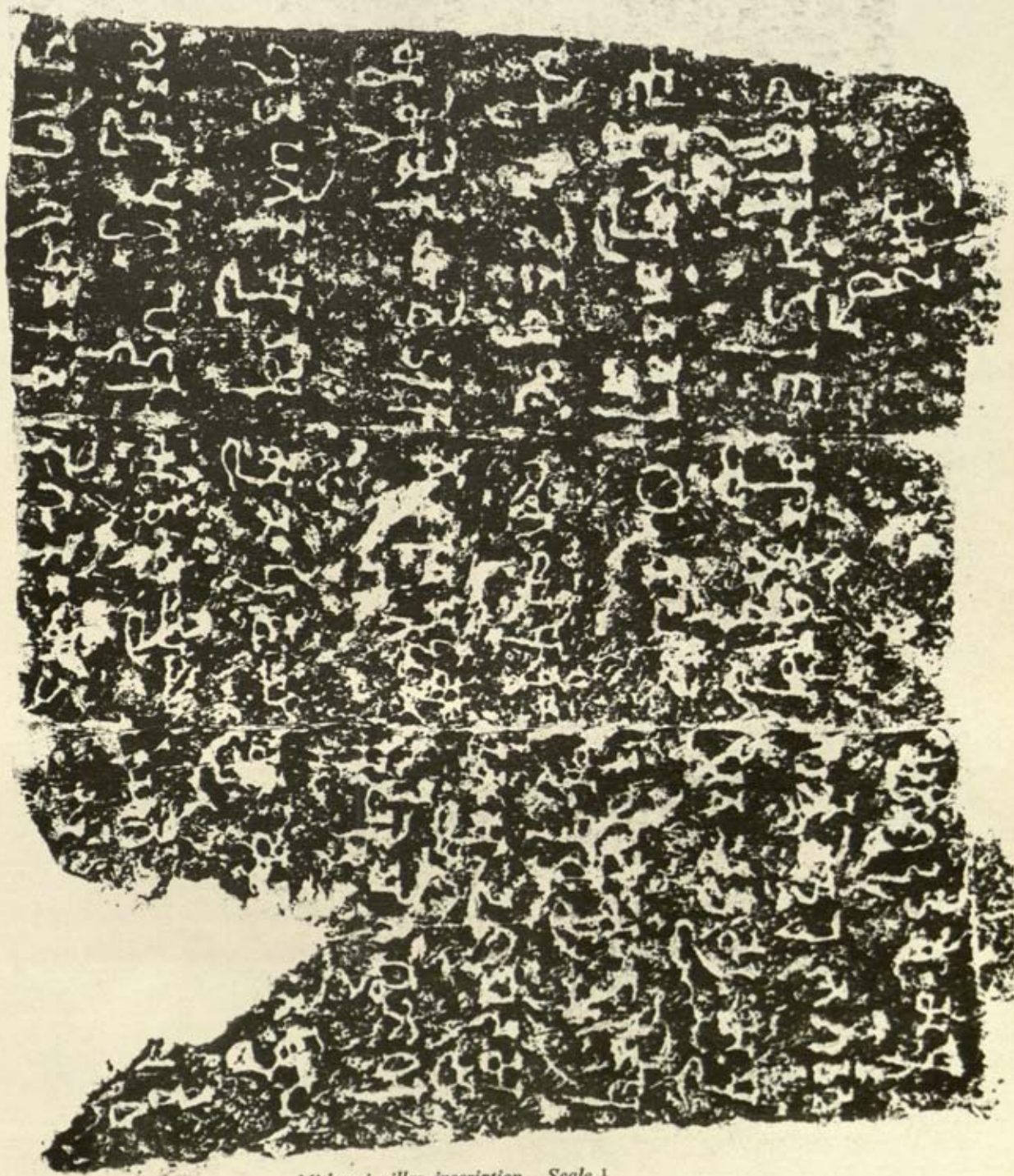
ii. b.



iii.



Same as plate XXI



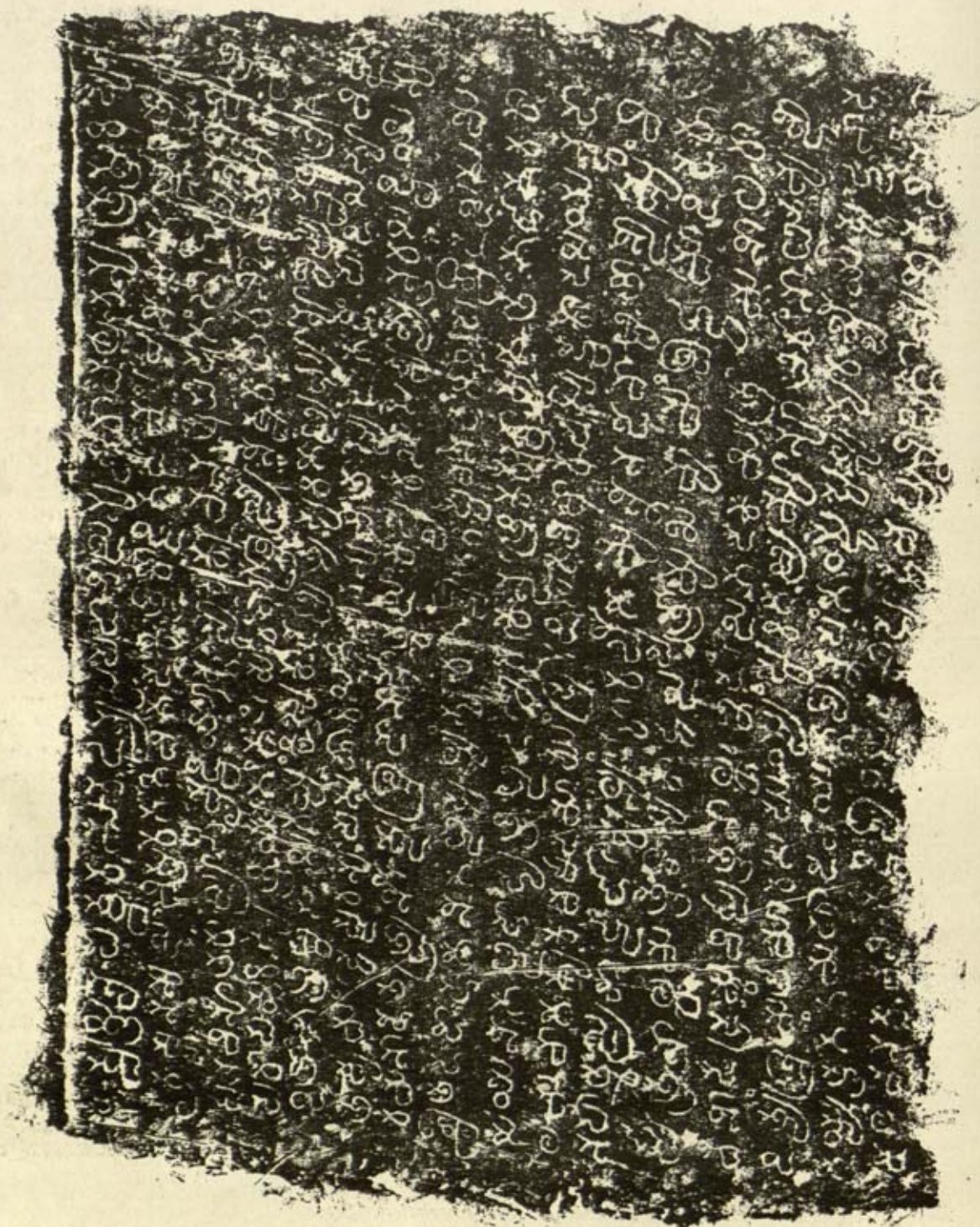
Mithouri pillar inscription. Scale $\frac{1}{2}$



Śivanvāyal inscription of Pallava Narasimhavarman I (first side). Scale $\frac{1}{4}$



Ghaṇṭasālā Prākṛit inscription. Scale ½



Hulgur plate of Rāshtrakūṭa Khattiga. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$

reign of the Hoysala king Vīra-Rāmanātha (= A.D. 1268). The inscription also mentions the installation, in that very *maṇḍapa*, of the images of Hayagrīva, Sarasvatī and Vyāsa-bhagavān, the presiding deities of learning, by the same person. It is thus noteworthy that inscriptional evidence to the existence of libraries in prominent temples, as laid down in the *Āgamas*, is found as early as the thirteenth century A.D.

Another inscription from Śrīraṅgam written in Grantha script and Telugu language is of the time of Kākatīya Pratāparudradēva and is dated in Śaka 1239. It states that the king's commander Dēvari Nāyaka marched with an army to the south against the five Pāṇdyas, defeated Vīra-Pāṇḍya and the Malayāla Tiruvadi Kulaśēkhara at Tiruvadikunṇam and established Sundara-Pāṇḍya at Vīradhāvaḷam. The inscription is important in that it reveals the part played by the Kākatīya king in the internecine wars among the Pāṇdyas and in establishing Sundara-Pāṇḍya at Vīradhāvaḷam.

The benefactions of the Vijayanagara king, Virūpāksha II (fourteenth century A.D.) to the principal deity of Śrīraṅgam, are recorded in two Sanskrit verses engraved on one of the walls of the temple at the place. The first of these is the same as the opening verse in the drama *Nārāyaṇīvilāsa* in which the *sūtradhāra* introduces king Virūpāksha as the author of that play. As this verse is apparently copied from the drama it may be surmised that the king took keen interest in popularizing his composition.

That the raids of the Gajapatis of Orissa in the south extended as far as Śrīraṅgam is borne out by the Śrīraṅgam inscription of Gajapati Hambīra Mahāpātra. As no inscriptions of this family are found further south it may be taken that Śrīraṅgam was the utmost limit of their incursions into the south. The record is dated Śaka 1386, Subhānu (= A.D. 1464), and states that this chief endowed the Śrīraṅgam temple with a gift of cows.

From Rāmgadh in the Sandur State (Bellary District) comes an inscription mentioning Kumāra-Rāmanātha, the hero of the Kannaḍa poems *Kumāra-Rāmanāthana-Sāṅgatyā* and *Paradūra-sōdara-Rāmana-Charite*. It is dated Śaka 1450 in the reign of the Vijayanagara king Kṛṣṇadēvarāya and records the construction of a temple for the deity Rāmanāthadēva at Hosamaleyadurga in memory of Vīra-Rāmanātha Oḍeya of Hosamale and other heroes who fell in battle along with him. Rāmanātha Oḍeya is stated to be the son of Khaṇḍērāya Kampilarāya and Vīra-Gujjala Hariharadēvī and grandson of Mummaḍi Siṅgaṇa. This record, though removed in point of time by about two centuries from the time of Rāmanātha Oḍeya, is interesting inasmuch as it reveals the love and esteem with which this hero's memory was cherished for generations. Rāmanātha Oḍeya was famous as Kumāra-Rāma who valiantly fought against the Muslims just prior to the foundation of the Vijayanagara kingdom. The inscription affords epigraphical confirmation to the account found in the Kannaḍa literary works mentioned above that he was the son of Kampilarāya. The place Hosamale, where the temple was erected in memory of Rāmanātha, is evidently the present Rāmgadh, formerly known as Rāmanmalai (Sandur State, Madras Presidency), the findspot of the inscription. It may be noted that Rāmgadh contains traces of a fortification.

A *Nishidhi* inscription from Sonda (North Kanara District) records the death of the Jaina teacher Bhaṭṭākalanīkadēva who may be identified with the famous author of the Sanskrit grammar of the Kannaḍa language. It is dated Śaka 1577.

III. MISCELLANEOUS INSCRIPTIONS

Twenty potsherds discovered in the excavations at Arikamedu near Pondicherry (South India) bear graffiti. Though brief and mostly fragmentary, they are very important inasmuch as they supply specimens of the ancient Drāviḍī script, allied to Brāhmī, as also

of the earliest writing in the Tamil language. A detailed and illustrated account of them has already been presented in *Ancient India*, no. 2 (July, 1946), pp. 109-114.

Twenty-four potsherds from the Peshawar Museum were examined and found to contain portions of short dedicatory records of names in Kharōshthī characters of about A.D. 200. Only in one case the writing is engraved, while in the rest it is painted in black. The engraved one reads *Budhamitrasa*, 'of Budhamitra', and seems to be a complete record.

From Sunet in the Ludhiāna District of the Punjab came a collection of twenty-eight terracotta sealings, mostly containing personal names like Śāṅkaranārāyaṇa, Viṣṇudāsa, etc., in the Gupta script assignable to c. fifth century A.D.

A copper tray was received from the Rajasaheb of Jamkhandi State in the Bombay Province, bearing an inscription in Hebrew on its inner side. It gives a descriptive account of the history of Solomon's throne and greatness.

IV. MUSLIM INSCRIPTIONS

During the decade under review about 200 inscriptions were collected, of which the important ones refer to the Sultāns of Delhi, Bengal, Gujarat and Mālwa; the Nizām Shāhs of Ahmadnagar; the 'Ādil Shāhs of Bijāpur; the Baihmanīs of Gulbarga; the Barīd Shāhs of Bidar; the Quṭb Shāhs of Golconda; and the Mughul emperors of India. They mostly deal with political, economic and religious history of the Muslim period and also shed some light on important personages otherwise unknown to history. Some of them are very interesting both from the palaeographic and historic points of view inasmuch as they represent exquisite styles of *Naskh*, *Thulth* and *Nasta'liq*, give new regal titles of kings and even correct dates known from other sources. The more important of them are briefly noticed below in chronological order.

Mathurā, although plentifully rich in remains of the early Buddhist and Brahmanical periods, was commonly believed to possess no Muslim building of pre-Mughul time.¹ An old Persian inscription, in verse, discovered in the tomb of Makhdūm Shāh Walāyat at Mathurā, however, refers to a Muslim structure built at Mathurā long before the reign of Akbar. It is unfortunately only fragmentary and the event referred to therein is not clear. Nevertheless, it mentions Sultān 'Alāu'd-Dīn Khaljī with his title 'Sikandar-i-Thānī' (Alexander II), Gujarat and the mosque of Ulugh Khān. Since 'Alāu'd-Dīn Khaljī's brother, Almās Beg, entitled Ulugh Khān, was deputed to conquer Gujarat² in A.H. 697 (A.D. 1297-98), it is reasonably inferred that the record alludes to the Gujarat expedition and the erection of a mosque at Mathurā by that noble. Also, early Muslim inscriptions in India are generally in prose and rarely in verse; hence the importance of the epigraph under notice.

Sultān Shamsu'd-Dīn Ilyās Shāh of Bengal was the first independent king of Bengal, but his chroniclers are at variance about the exact year of his accession. Ghulām Husain, author of the *Riāzu's-Salāṭīn*, and Charles Stewart, author of the *History of Bengal* (London, 1813), maintain that he became king in A.H. 746 (A.D. 1345-46), while others are inclined to place his accession about A.H. 740 (A.D. 1339-40) on numismatic evidence. But the recent discovery of an Arabic inscription in the neighbourhood of Calcutta, mentioning the construction of a mosque in A.H. 743 (A.D. 1342-43) for a saint, named 'Alāu'l-Haq,

¹ F. S. Growse, *Mathura: A District Memoir*, 3rd ed. (Allahabad, 1883), pp. 33-34.

² Zia'u'd-Dīn Baranī, *Tārīkh-i-Firūz Shāhī*, Persian text (Bibliotheca Indica, Calcutta, 1862), p. 251; *Tārīkh-i-Firishā*, Persian text (Nawal Kishor Press, Lucknow, 1905), I, pp. 102-03.

in the reign of Sultān Ilyās Shāh, conclusively contradicts the date given by Ghulām Husain and Stewart and tends to support the other view.

A Persian inscription from Bheṭ Dwārka, a small island in the vicinity of Okha Port in Kāthiāwāḍ, records the erection of a mosque in the reign of Sultān Firūz Shāh Tughluq of Delhi in A.H. 777 (A.D. 1375-76) at the instance of Shamsu'd-Dīn Dāmaghānī. It obviously corrects the date of Dāmaghānī's appointment as Governor of Gujarat which, according to the *Tārīkh-i-Firishṭa*,¹ was A.H. 778 (A.D. 1376-77), or a year later.

An inscribed slab, found lying at Holsingī in the Indi Taluqa of the Bījāpur District, deserves notice. Although undated, it bears the words 'the boundary of Sultān 'Alāu'd-Dīn Aḥmad Shāh' and is rightly supposed to have served as a boundary-mark of that king. Its historical significance lies in the facts that it establishes the tradition of the Muslim rulers of India to fix stone slabs carved with their names on the boundary of their territories and that Bījāpur formed part of the Baihmanī kingdom in the reign of 'Alāu'd-Dīn Aḥmad Shāh II (A.H. 839-62 = A.D. 1435-57).

An interesting stone record of the time of Ghayāth Shāh Khālījī of Mālwa (A.H. 880-906 = A.D. 1475-1500) has been recently discovered near the main gate of the Bhonrāsa Fort in the Gwalior State. The inscription is bilingual—Persian and Hindī—and contains a royal mandate sanctioning relief to his subjects in the form of remission of some taxes including the *jizya* and revival of usual worship, forbidding the slaughter of cows declared here as a 'sin', and preventing acts of vandalism possibly in respect of some temple. The inscription is fragmentary but sheds some light on the relations of the ruler and the ruled during the sovereignty of the Muslim rulers of Mālwa.

Briggs, in his English translation of the *Tārīkh-i-Firishṭa*,² gives A.H. 914 (A.D. 1508-09), in the reign of Maḥmūd Shāh Bīgarha of Gujarat, as the date of completion of the Jāmi' Masjid at Chāmpāner in the Pānch Mahal District of the Bombay Province. In support of this he quotes three Persian couplets of a contemporary poet, the last hemistich of which contains the chronogram *Khutba-wa-mimbar* (lit. sermon and pulpit) yielding A.H. 914. Eminent modern scholars have accepted his views.³ But a Persian epigraph, in verse, above the minor *mihrāb* of the Jāmi' Masjid, which so far passed for a Qurānic verse on account of its intricately interlaced letters of the *Thulth* style of Arabic script, clearly records the completion of the mosque in A.H. 924 (A.D. 1524), or ten years later, in the reign of Muẓaffar Shāh II; the son and successor of Maḥmūd Shāh Bīgarha. This epigraph settles once and for all the date of completion of the mosque, while the date A.H. 914, hitherto accepted on the authority of Briggs, may now be considered to relate to the installation of the pulpit in the elaborately ornamented central *mihrāb* with a view to starting religious service in the mosque as early as possible pending the completion of other parts of the building.

In the historical city of Fatehpur Sikrī, where Bābur staked his all on the bloody battle against Rāṇā Sāngā in A.D. 1527 and gave Sikrī a new appellation 'Shukrī' ('Thanks-giving') to commemorate his hard-won victory over the Rāṇā,⁴ no monument of that Emperor's time was so far identified with certainty. But a much worn-out inscription in *Thulth* characters, recently discovered from the steining of a well in an out-of-the-way

¹ Briggs, *Tārīkh-i-Firishṭa*, English translation (London, 1829), I, pp. 455-56.

² Ibid., IV, p. 70.

³ J. Burgess, *Muhammadan Architecture in Gujarat*, II (Arch. Surv. Ind., New Imperial Series, XXIII, London, 1896), p. 42; *Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency* (Bombay, 1879), III, p. 309; *Cambridge History of India* (Cambridge, 1928), III, pp. 612-13.

⁴ *Akbarnāma*, Persian text (Calcutta, 1877), I, p. 105.

place near the Ajmeri Gate, helps to assign the construction of the well to Bābur in A.H. 933 (A.D. 1527) on his return from the battle against Rāṇā Sāngā.

Near the Takya Masjid at Dīdwāna in the Jodhpur State stands a pillar which is the only remnant of a majestic gateway that existed there in the past. To it is fixed a marble slab bearing a Persian inscription in verse composed by the eminent poet, Nī'matu'llāh Rasūlī of Akbar's reign, and calligraphed in *Nasta'liq* style by one Jān Muḥammad. The epigraph is chronogrammatic, yielding A.H. 1000 (A.D. 1591-92), and contains 'Abu'l-Ghāzī' as the *Kunniyat* of Emperor Akbar instead of his usual epithet 'Abu'l-Fath'.

In the Khānqāh of Ḥazrat Tārikīn at Nagaur in the Jodhpur State there are four Persian inscriptions in *Nasta'liq* letters in relief concerning Mīr Muḥammad Ma'sūm Nāmī, a well-known inscription-writer of Akbar's reign. One of them is written by Nāmī and the rest by his son, Mīr Buzurg, who, like his father, was a good calligraphist. Of these, two are of sufficient historical value. Nāmī's own epigraph speaks of his deputation to 'Irāq in A.H. 1010 (A.D. 1601-02) as a *ḥājib* (Chamberlain or Minister), a fact not traceable in contemporary records. The other inscription by Mīr Buzurg mentions Nāmī's compilation of a collection of five poems, entitled *Khamsah*, from which specimens of verses have been quoted, and also records Nāmī's return from the embassy to Irān in 1013 A.H. (A.D. 1604) corroborating the date given in the *Akbarnāma*.¹

Two inscriptions, one in Persian and the other in Marāṭhī, have been discovered from a well at Āshūr in Bidar assigning the construction of the well to a royal officer, named Jagapat Rāo, during the reign of Mīrzā Walī Amīr Barīd Shāh at Bidar in 1018 A.H. There is a difference of opinion among the historians about the title of this king: according to Haig,² 'Alī Barīd Shāh was the title of the last king of Bidar who ruled from A.H. 1018 (A.D. 1609-10), whereas the *Tārīkh-i-Firishāh* and the *Basā'īnu's-Salāṭīn* are united in calling him as 'Mīrzā Walī Amīr Barīd Shāh' and the latter view is supported by these two epigraphs which are also beautiful specimens of *Thulth* style of writing so highly prized in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is also interesting to note that Marāṭhā officers wielded much influence at the court of the Barīdī kings of Bidar with the result that there had been extensive use of Marāṭhī in official documents and epigraphical records of that period.

Two inscriptions dated A.H. 1045 (A.D. 1636) and one dated 1046 A.H. (A.D. 1636) have been found engraved on rocks in the ancient Sātmālā hill-forts in the Nāsik District of the Bombay Province. They contain the names of fourteen hill-forts built by Nīzām Shāhī kings of Ahmadnagar to defend their territory against the encroachments of neighbouring States and assign their conquest to Allāh Vardī Khān Turkmān in the reign of Emperor Shāh Jahān. One of them gives the 12th of Shawwāl, A.H. 1045 (20th March, A.D. 1636) as the date of the fall of Chandor fort and thus corrects the date of the event (16th of the same month of the same year) as recorded in the court-chronicles of Shāh Jahān.³ These are important records containing elaborate historical data which are generally corroborated by the court-chronicles of Shāh Jahān.

Along the frieze of the outer porch of the Dīwān-i-Khāṣ in the Agra Fort is a long inscription in elegant Persian verse inlaid in *Nasta'liq* characters. It is of considerable interest not only on account of its elegant composition by Mīrzā Ṭalīb Kalīm, the poet-laureate of Shāh Jahān, and its exquisite penmanship, but also because it brings to light an important fact otherwise not known to history. The *Tuzuk-i-Jahāngīrī*⁴ (or the Memoirs written by Jahāngīr) mentions the installation of a gold chain, called the *نَجِيرِ عَدَل*

¹ *Akbarnāma*, III, pp. 825, 836.

² *Cambridge History of India*, III, p. 709.

³ Mullā 'Abdu'l-Ḥamīd Lāhorī, *Bādshāhnāma* (Bibliotheca Indica, Calcutta, 1867), I, p. 146.

⁴ *Tuzuk-i-Jahāngīrī*, Persian text (Aligarh), pp. 3-4.

(Chain of Justice), by that emperor in his palace in such a way that the other end of it was kept hanging outside the Agra Fort on the riverside to enable the oppressed to pull it unobstructed. The emperor would thus call the aggrieved immediately to his presence and redress their grievances. It was commonly believed that the above practice probably did not survive Jahāngīr. But the fifth and sixth couplets of the inscription under notice clearly suggest that the Chain of Justice continued to exist also in the reign of Shāh Jahān, as they say, 'The path of tyranny is absolutely closed (and) by his Chain of Justice oppression is stopped. I am proud of the Chain inasmuch as, by the King's equity, it is ever ready to do justice to those who seek it.'

Two Persian inscriptions of the reign of Emperor Aurangzīb discovered from the Golconda fort in the Hyderabad State deserve notice inasmuch as they not only refer at some length to the first siege of Golconda by Prince Muḥammad, son of Aurangzīb, in A.D. 1656 but also hint at the chief reason, not otherwise known to history, of the Mughals raising the siege and concluding a treaty with 'Abdu'llāh Quṭb Shāh of Golconda. 'Among the nobles of the king (Aurangzeb),' says one of the epigraphs, 'there was one, Mīr-i-Mīrān, who had promised to conquer the fort and make it over to the king within three days By the Divine decree a gun-shot struck the body of Mīr-i-Mīrān in such a manner that he expired in that very entrenchment (from where he was bombarding the fort). Three days after his death a treaty was concluded.....' This shows that the Mughals had to come to terms with 'Abdu'llāh Quṭb Shāh because they could not afford to prolong the siege on account of the death of their able general.

A Persian epigraph fixed to the *mihrāb* of Shāh Changī Madārī's mosque at Dīdwāna in the Jodhpur State mentions the completion of the mosque on the 7th of Zil-ḥajja, 5th regnal year of Sultān Muḥammad Mua'zzam Shāh Bahādur 'Ālamgīr. The inscription is of much historical value inasmuch as history is silent about Sultān Muḥammad Mua'zzam Shāh Bahādur ever assuming his father's title 'Ālamgīr ('the Conqueror of the World'). Only two coins in the coin cabinet of the Central Museum at Lahore¹ style him as 'Ālamgīr II, but the authenticity of this view was doubted. This epigraph, however, supports the numismatic evidence and makes an interesting contribution to our knowledge.

The Ailuru (Krishnā District) inscription of Mīr Jumla is an interesting record written in Sanskrit, which testifies to the tolerance and respect shown by the Muslim rulers for the religious practices of the Hindus. It states that Mīr Jumla Muḥammad Syed Nawāb who was an officer under 'Abdu'llāh Quṭb Shāh (of Golconda) of the seventeenth century A.D. had a *sarvatōmukha-yajña* performed by Vēmuri Anantanārāyaṇa Sōmayājin and granted him an *agrahāra* for the teaching of the *Vēdas* and *śāstras* and for extending hospitality to strangers. The merit of the gift is assigned to the Sultān.

In the *Khānqāh* of Ḥazrat Tārikīn at Nagaur is a large stone slab bearing a Persian quatrain inscribed in ornamental *Thultho-Naskh* characters in relief. Although not of historical value, it is of some palaeographic interest and is a good specimen of pre-Mughul ornamental calligraphy. The letters which must, as a rule, stand alone have been so joined to the succeeding ones merely for ornamental purposes that they baffle the reader at the outset. The quatrain pathetically requests the visitor to offer a prayer for the supplication of the dead.

¹ *Catalogue of Coins in the Punjab Museum* (Oxford, 1914), II, pt. II, pp. 273, 276.